



THE STATE OFFICE OF VICTIM ASSISTANCE

***1205 Pendleton Street, Room 401
Columbia, South Carolina 29201
Business Line: 803.734.1900 Victims Only: 800.220.5370
www.sova.sc.gov***

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Crime Victims' Fund?

The South Carolina Crime Victims' Compensation Fund is a financial assistance program designed to help victims with expenses directly resulting from a crime that are not covered by other payment sources. It is administered by the State Office of Victim Assistance (SOVA), and is governed by state and federal laws. If you qualify for the program, it can pay certain costs for recovery treatment or burial arrangements up to the maximum allowed by law.

Who is Able to Apply?

If you or a loved one were injured by violence, such as:

Assault	Homicide
Domestic Violence	Felony DUI w/bodily injury
Sexual Assault	Felony DUI w/death
Reckless Homicide	

The State Office of Victim Assistance may be able to help you put the pieces back together.

What are the Eligibility Criteria?

- Crime must occur in South Carolina
- Victim must sustain direct injury-physical or psychological
- No contributory behavior (initiated or provoked incident)
- No illegal activity at time of crime
- Must cooperate with SOVA and Law Enforcement
- Crime must be reported within 48 hours
- Claim must be filed within 180 days

Will law enforcement be involved with my claim?

Yes. Law Enforcement will be contacted to confirm the facts of the case and provide additional information. Your claim cannot be processed without a copy of the law enforcement incident report.

When will I know if I qualify?

After you have sent us the application you will be notified by us that you are eligible or ineligible. If you are eligible you will receive a "Notice of Award" that will list how much SOVA is going to pay on the bills you submitted. Each time itemized bills are submitted, they are considered for payment. When these are paid, you will receive another "Notice of Award." You may receive many of them while your claim is active.

If I qualify, what will SOVA pay?

SOVA can help with certain types of crime related costs. In every case, the expense has to be linked to losses from injury or death as a result of the crime. In order for payment to be considered you must submit the medical claim form or explanation of benefits.

***Up to combined total of \$15,000 for:**

- Medical/Dental Costs**
- Counseling (from a licensed professional)**
- Burial bills for a deceased victim (maximum \$4,000.00)**
- Lost Wages/Loss of Support**
- Mileage to and from Dr. Appointments/Therapy Sessions**
- Eyeglasses damaged during the victimization**

What if I have insurance am I eligible for SOVA benefits?

If you have private or public medical insurance (to include Medicare, Medicaid, etc.) or some other policy or program that will pay some of your bills, you will need to apply to them also. State law says that SOVA has to make sure that other available payment sources pay first and then we can consider paying the rest. That way the Crime Victims' Compensation Fund will not run out of money and more victims can be helped.

How do I get the money?

Checks for lost wages/support will be sent directly to you in lump sums. For medical, mental health and funeral expenses, you first have to send SOVA copies of bills that list how much you owe for each item after other payment sources (if you have them) have paid. If you also have receipts showing what you have paid out of pocket, you must submit them to be reimbursed. You are held responsible for your bills, but SOVA can pay doctors and counselors on your behalf, once you have been declared eligible. SOVA will pay what it can to the facilities or businesses that have given you medical or funeral assistance. If you have already paid for medically necessary items such as medication or replacement eyeglasses, SOVA can repay you what you spent out of pocket. Any remaining portion that SOVA cannot pay will be billed to you by the places that helped you.

Do family members qualify?

Sometimes, if one of your immediate family members is a victim, you may be able to get counseling or receive part of your wages if you have to stay out of work to take care of him/her. If you paid the funeral bill for a family member who was a victim, you may be eligible to get back up to \$4,000.

If I do not qualify for SOVA funds what are the steps?

If you do not qualify, you will be notified that your claim has been denied and you will receive a packet of information describing how to appeal SOVA's decision. If you wish to appeal, follow the instructions in the "appeal packet" and return it to SOVA within 30 days.